



June 24, 2004

New York City physician is sentenced to 46 months for drug trafficking & health care fraud

**Marvin Heldeman, who wrote unnecessary prescriptions for steroids and pain
relievers, also forfeits a \$1,000,000 Manhattan apartment**

A federal judge today sentenced **Marvin Heldeman**, 71, a dermatologist based in New York, to 46 months in federal prison for health care fraud and drug trafficking. In March, Heldeman admitted that he wrote medically unnecessary prescriptions for anabolic steroids and pain relievers. The prescriptions were filled at Rhode Island pharmacies and paid for, in part, by Blue Cross Blue Shield of Rhode Island.

The Office of the United States Attorney announced the sentence, which Chief U.S. District Court Judge Ernest C. Torres imposed today in U.S. District Court, Providence. Judge Torres also fined Heldeman \$90,000 and ordered him to pay Blue Cross Blue Shield \$19,385 in restitution. Heldeman also forfeited to the government his apartment at 201 West 70th Street, Manhattan, which he has valued at \$1,000,000, because it was used to facilitate his illicit drug distribution.

Judge Torres ordered Heldeman to report to prison on July 23.

At the hearing in March at which Heldeman pleaded guilty, Assistant U.S. Attorney Luis M. Matos said that, between October 2000 and December 2002, Heldeman wrote a series of medically unnecessary prescriptions for drugs such as Oxycontin, Percocet, and various forms of anabolic steroids. An unindicted coconspirator, Timothy DiPaola, who is now deceased, and

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other men filled the prescriptions at Brooks and CVS pharmacies in Rhode Island. The pharmacies, unwitting participants in the scheme, submitted claims to Blue Cross for reimbursement.

A joint investigation by the **Food and Drug Administration, Office of Criminal Investigations**, the **Drug Enforcement Administration**, the **Postal Inspection Service**, and **North Providence Police** developed evidence that Heldeman wrote illegitimate prescriptions for DiPaola and at least five other individuals. There were no records that Heldeman ever conducted medical examinations before prescribing the medication. In return for the prescriptions, the recipients would pose for Heldeman in various states of undress.

A search of Heldeman's Manhattan apartment and office in December 2002 revealed a videotape of Heldeman introducing himself as "Dr. Marvin" and videotaping his clients in various states of undress. Agents also seized business cards that read, "Dr Marv, the Bodybuilder's Friend."

Heldeman pleaded guilty to 24 charges: conspiracy to commit health care fraud, 17 counts of health care fraud, three counts of conspiracy to distribute controlled substances and three counts of aiding and abetting drug distribution.

Assistant U.S. Attorneys Matos and Michael P Iannotti prosecuted the case.

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